



San Diego City Attorney **CASEY GWINN**

MEDIA RELEASE

SAN DIEGO CONSTRUCTION COMPANY PROSECUTED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL VIOLATIONS

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A San Diego construction company paid \$125,000 in civil penalties, costs, and other monetary relief to settle an environmental law enforcement case prosecuted by the San Diego City Attorney's Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit.

Watkins Contracting Company was charged in a civil complaint, filed in San Diego Superior Court, with illegally disposing of asbestos-containing construction debris. The complaint also alleged that the company violated the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants by emitting the asbestos-containing debris into the air.

The City of San Diego's Environmental Services Department, with assistance from the San Diego Air Pollution Control District, investigated the incident after receiving a tenant's complaint during renovation of a downtown office building. Investigators discovered that Watkins Contracting improperly removed and illegally disposed of asbestos-containing construction debris. Subsequent citizen complaints revealed additional violations by the company at other job locations. Once notified of the violations, the company cooperated with law enforcement and the City Attorney's Office, and took steps to prevent future violations.

The judgment also requires Greg Watkins, owner of Watkins Construction, and several of his managers, to personally complete four community service projects at two San Diego YMCA camps, which will save the YMCA approximately \$12,500.

City Attorney Casey Gwinn said: "Companies that fail to follow environmental health and safety laws often have an unfair economic advantage over their competitors. My office is committed to ensuring that all companies that do business in San Diego comply with California's environmental laws, thereby protecting the public's health and safety while maintaining a level playing field for all companies doing business in San Diego."

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